

HOOVER DAM AND BOULDER CITY, 1931-1936: A DISCUSSION AMONG SOME WHO WERE THERE

Interviewees: Marion Allen, Leo Dunbar, Erma Godbey, Carl Merrill, Mary Ann Merrill

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Description

In the fall of 1985, a panel discussion entitled, "The Human Side of the Construction of Hoover Dam," was conducted to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the completion of Hoover Dam. Sponsored by the Nevada Humanities Committee and the University of Nevada-Las Vegas chapter of Phi Alpha Theta, the discussion was moderated by Guy Rocha, state archivist of Nevada, assisted by Tom King, director of the University of Nevada, Reno Oral History Program. Participants in the discussion included: Erma Godbey, wife of a dam worker who was among the first to arrive on the site in 1931 (there is also a complete biographical oral history of Mrs. Godbey in the UNOHP collection); Leo Dunbar, dam worker and early resident of Boulder City; Marion Allen, who worked at several jobs on the dam, and is the author of Hoover Dam and Boulder City; Carl Merrill, mess hall flunky who became a puddler and hook tender on the dam in 1934; and Mary Ann Merrill (nee Vaughan), who lived as a teenager in Boulder City when the dam was under construction.

The panel discussion, which was attended by about one hundred people, was transcribed and edited, resulting in the volume entitled, Hoover Dam and Boulder City, 1931-1936: A Discussion Among Some Who Were There.

**HOOVER DAM AND BOULDER CITY, 1931-1936:
A DISCUSSION AMONG SOME WHO WERE THERE**

HOOVER DAM AND BOULDER CITY, 1931-1936: A DISCUSSION AMONG SOME WHO WERE THERE

An Oral History Conducted by R.T. King
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PREFACE TO THE DIGITAL EDITION

Established in 1964, the University of Nevada Oral History Program (UNOHP) explores the remembered past through rigorous oral history interviewing, creating a record for present and future researchers. The program's collection of primary source oral histories is an important body of information about significant events, people, places, and activities in twentieth and twenty-first century Nevada and the West.

The UNOHP wishes to make the information in its oral histories accessible to a broad range of patrons. To achieve this goal, its transcripts must speak with an intelligible voice. However, no type font contains symbols for physical gestures and vocal modulations which are integral parts of verbal communication. When human speech is represented in print, stripped of these signals, the result can be a morass of seemingly tangled syntax and incomplete sentences—totally verbatim transcripts sometimes verge on incoherence. Therefore, this transcript has been lightly edited.

While taking great pains not to alter meaning in any way, the editor may have removed false starts, redundancies, and the “uhs,” “ahs,” and other noises with which speech is often liberally sprinkled; compressed some passages which, in unaltered form, misrepresent the chronicler's meaning; and relocated some material to place information in its intended context. Laughter is represented with [laughter] at the end of a sentence in which it occurs, and ellipses are used to indicate that a statement has been interrupted or is incomplete...or that there is a pause for dramatic effect.

As with all of our oral histories, while we can vouch for the authenticity of the interviews in the UNOHP collection, we advise readers to keep in mind that these are remembered pasts, and we do not claim that the recollections are entirely free of error. We can state, however, that the transcripts accurately reflect the oral history recordings on which they were based. Accordingly, each transcript should be approached with the

same prudence that the intelligent reader exercises when consulting government records, newspaper accounts, diaries, and other sources of historical information. All statements made here constitute the remembrance or opinions of the individuals who were interviewed, and not the opinions of the UNOHP.

In order to standardize the design of all UNOHP transcripts for the online database, most have been reformatted, a process that was completed in 2012. This document may therefore differ in appearance and pagination from earlier printed versions. Rather than compile entirely new indexes for each volume, the UNOHP has made each transcript fully searchable electronically. If a previous version of this volume existed, its original index has been appended to this document for reference only. A link to the entire catalog can be found online at <http://oralhistory.unr.edu/>.

For more information on the UNOHP or any of its publications, please contact the University of Nevada Oral History Program at Mail Stop 0324, University of Nevada, Reno, NV, 89557-0324 or by calling 775/784-6932.

Alicia Barber
Director, UNOHP
July 2012

ORIGINAL PREFACE

The University of Nevada Oral History Program (UNOHP) engages in systematic interviewing of persons who can provide firsthand accounts or descriptions of events, people and places that are the raw material of Nevada history. The products of this research are the tapes of the interviews and their transcriptions.

In themselves, oral history interviews are not history; however, they often contain valuable primary source material, as useful in the process of historiography as the written records with which historians customarily work. While the properly conducted oral history is a reliable source, verifying the accuracy of all of the statements made in the course of an interview would require more time and money than the UNOHP's operating budget permits. The program can vouch that the statements were made, but it does not assert that they are all entirely free of error. Accordingly, oral histories should be approached with the same caution that the reader exercises when consulting government records, newspaper accounts,

diaries and other sources of historical information.

Then human speech is captured in print, the result can be a morass of tangled syntax, false starts and incomplete sentences, sometimes verging on incoherence. No type font contains symbols for the physical gestures and diverse vocal modulations which are integral parts of communication through speech. Experience shows that, in the absence of any orthography for such non-verbal communication, totally verbatim transcripts are often largely unreadable and subsequently a waste of the resources expended in their production. Therefore, in the interest of facilitating their use, it is the policy of the UNOHP to produce finished oral histories that are substantially refined versions of the direct transcriptions from which they derive. Editors are instructed to keep before them the ideal of a verbatim narrative, but they will, in preparing a text:

- a. generally delete false starts, redundancies and the uhs, ahs and other noises with which speech is often liberally sprinkled;

b. occasionally compress language that would be confusing to the reader in unaltered form;

c. often shift portions of a transcript to place them in their proper topical or chronological context;

d. for clarity, insert words that can be clearly inferred but were not spoken; and

e. enclose in [brackets] explanatory information or words that were neither uttered nor implied, but have been added by the editor to render the text intelligible.

Each edited oral history is reviewed for accuracy by the interviewee before a final master copy is produced. Nonetheless, the UNOHP realizes that there will be some researchers who prefer to take their oral history straight, without even the limited editing that occurred in the production of this text; they are directed to the tape recording. Copies of all or part of this work and the tape recording from which it is derived are available from:

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INTRODUCTION

In the fall of 1985 various programs were presented in Boulder City, Nevada, to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the completion of Hoover Dam. One such event was a panel discussion entitled “The Human Side of the Construction of Hoover Dam.” Sponsored by the Nevada Humanities Committee and the University of Nevada-Las Vegas chapter of Phi Alpha Theta, the discussion was moderated by Guy Rocha, state archivist of Nevada, assisted by Tom King, director of the University of Nevada-Reno’s Oral History Program. Participants included: Erma Godbey, wife of a dam worker who was among the first to arrive on the site in 1931 (a complete, biographical oral history of Erma Godbey is in the collection of the UNR Oral History Program); Leo Dunbar, dam worker and early resident of Boulder City; Marion Allen, who worked at several jobs on the dam, and is the author of *Hoover Dam and Boulder City*; Carl Merrill, mess-hall “flunky” in 1933, before becoming a puddler and hook tender on the dam in 1934; and Mary Ann Merrill (nee

Vaughan), who lived as a teenager in Boulder City when the dam was under construction.

Tom King recorded the panel discussion, which was held on 17 September 1985 in the auditorium of the Boulder City High School before an audience of about 100 people. The following is an edited transcript of the discussion, which began with Erma Godbey, first of the panelists on the dam site, recalling some of her husband’s experiences.

HOOVER DAM AND BOULDER CITY, 1931-1936: A DISCUSSION AMONG SOME WHO WERE THERE

Erma Godbey: The very first job that my husband Tom got was to stand down at the base where you go up to the observation point. This was the third day of July, 1931, when the Department of the Interior came in, and they wanted to see just where the lake was going to be when the dam was completed. Of course, it was all desert there then, and they were afraid that they'd get lost down in the canyons if they took any other place, so my husband was just there as a guard to send them up.

After that was finished, he spoke to Mr. [Robert Gilmore] Le Tourneau, who was the man who had the contract to build the road to the dam. Mr. Le Tourneau and his sons were people who had been inventors of great earth-moving machines that would do roadwork, and they had their primary practice here on that particular piece of road. Also, Mr. Le Tourneau had a tent down at Ragtown, and he was a preacher, so he used to hold services at Ragtown.

[Ragtown, also known as Williamsville, consisted of tents and crude shacks.

Williamsville was named for Deputy Marshal Claude Williams, who tried to organize the town by introducing streets and a church. Williamsville was located at Hemenway Wash at the mouth of Black Canyon. Estimates of the town's population in June 1931 range from 600 to 1,400 people. Williamsville was temporarily closed in August 1931 as a result of strike agitation, and in 1932 the Bureau of Reclamation ordered the township permanently closed. The township was subsequently abandoned. In 1935, Lake Mead covered the site where Ragtown, or Williamsville, had existed.—ed.]

Tom got a job with Mr. Le Tourneau, and so he went to work the very next day, the Fourth of July, just with a shovel. The men would go to work, and so many of the men were passing out with heat stroke that they decided that they would go to work at 4:00 in the morning and work until noon. Nobody worked from noon until 4:00 p.m. because that was the heat of the day. Another crew come on at 4:00 and worked till midnight with searchlights. At that time they didn't

know anything about taking extra salt, and people were sweating out all the salt in their bloodstream, and they were passing out.

We had been camping down in the river bottom, and there had been 3 women die right around me the twenty-sixth day of July. [The first construction workers at the dam site were forced to live on the floor of Black Canyon. Living conditions there were not suitable to human habitation. Temperatures sometimes reached 125 degrees Fahrenheit in the summer of 1931. Strong winds, cloudbursts, and flooding were other natural conditions of the area.—ed.]

Once when we were camping on the canyon floor in the summer of 1931, I got a slab of bacon. I had a little corner built in the corner of the tent, and I put the slab of bacon there, and I had some potatoes, and I had them down underneath it. All the grease melted out of the bacon and dripped down on the potatoes, and the potatoes fermented. Now, if anybody knows how nice potatoes smell when they ferment...! We had to hurry up and dig a hole and bury those potatoes.

I was going to tell you about Murl Emery's store. They would bring in the food and everything to Murl Emery's store. They never did have time to even check the bills of lading, so he would tell his customers, "Well, OK. Just pay us what you paid for the same thing before you came here." It was the honor system. They only had one man and his wife to take care of the store, because Mr. Emery was busy on the boats. So, now, I used to pay in Silverton 60¢ for a pound of coffee and 40¢ for a can of peaches and things like that, where people from Texas were paying about 20¢ for that can of peaches and about 40¢ for that can of coffee. Everybody just laid their money on the counter, and if there wasn't anybody to take care of you, you got what you wanted off of the shelf and laid your money

down. It was the honor system. But I want to tell you that one man who was working for Murl Emery quit after about a month, and he had snitched enough money from Murl Emery to buy himself a new car. [laughter]

Now, Murl Emery had a ferry across the river before we ever began to build the dam, so all of the engineers that had been doing the surveying for everything knew Murl. He had the contract to take the men down the river in boats to the diversion tunnels. The diversion tunnels were being dug from both ends at the same time. That meant that there were 8 crews around the clock—24 crews a day—going to those diversion tunnels, and they all went down river on the boats.

We had to bathe in the river, so everybody wore shimmies or something and washed up under the best they could. And I pretty near lost my baby in the river. Thank God my husband could swim—I never have been able to, but he was just like a fish, and he glommed her real quick. I was holding her by one leg, and there was a current that started to take her, and I yelled, and Pop got her real quick, thank God, because she's right here in the audience tonight!

Another thing we did.. .now, why in God's world I ever brought my ironing board with me, I'll never know, because I had an electric iron, and there was no way in creation to iron anything with an electric iron. But we always used to say we got a new piece of furniture today, whenever anybody'd get a new powder box. So I had a bench because I put the ironing board across 2 powder boxes, and I had a bench in the tent.

Then I just got a terrible, terrible burn. My face was sunburned; it was windburned; it was campfire burned—all 3. And I thought I'd caught some kind of a disease in the river. I was so afraid my children might get it that I...anybody that went into Vegas, I'd have

them get me some Listerine and some cotton. And I was taking this pure Listerine and this cotton and dabbing my face, so I was drying it out and burning it with the Listerine as well as what was already there. It was just getting so terrible, I said to my husband, "I've got to go to a doctor and see what's the matter with my face." And he would laugh at me, because when I would change expression, I'd get little cracks, and they'd bleed. So we stopped at the Six Companies camp that I was telling you about in Boulder, and we went to the doctor there. He said, "I can't even look at a woman or a child; you've got to go to Las Vegas. All I am here for is to give the men a physical and see if they can do a day's work before we give them a job."

Now, this was the Depression, and so many men had walked miles and miles, and they had been without food also. So we had to go into Las Vegas. But you couldn't go into Las Vegas until you set a car in the river for 3 days. All the cars had wooden spokes in those days, and the spokes dried out so bad that they just rattled and came loose. So if you were going to go to Las Vegas, you had to set your car in the river, and then you had to move it a little bit—not enough so as it'd float down the river, but enough so as the spokes would soak up—before you could go into Las Vegas.

So, we made the trip to Las Vegas, and needless to say, there wasn't any highway. It was just up hills and down dale and in the arroyos and stuff and dust. And the very first doctor's sign that I saw, I remember it was in the old Beckley Building upstairs, and I think that was Second and Fremont. Now, Fremont in those days only came out 6 blocks, and the last 2 blocks were residential. The first 4 blocks were casinos and a few little stores. So I went up, and the minute I opened the door and went into the doctor's office, he took one look at me, and he said, "My God, woman!

You've got the worst case of desert sunburn and windburn I've ever seen in my life!" And so he gave me a wash—it was a liquid—and also a prescription of salve that was in a zinc oxide base, and it just felt like heaven when I put it on my face.

Within the next few years I must have given away \$200 or \$300 worth of that prescription, because I always got it as soon as I got out or gave it to somebody. I mean, I bought it and then gave it to them, because they had my prescription on file so I could get it at the White Cross Drug in Las Vegas. Men used to go without a shirt, and then they would get such blisters on their back that sometimes they would be festered. And babies, especially—people thought that they'd be cooler if they run around without anything, and they'd get these terrible sun blisters, and then they would open, and they would be infected. So I gave that away constantly for 3 years.

I told my husband we had to move from the canyon to somewhere where I could get my kids to the doctor if necessary, and so we moved to Cowboy Bill's Camp, [out on Bonanza Road in Las Vegas.] My husband had to get all the money he had coming from Le Tourneau Construction to make that move. The thing was that whenever you had to get your money to do anything, you didn't have a job with that company any more; you had to look for a job somewhere else. So when he come back, he had to look for another job. He got work with Thompson Construction, building the railroad to the gravel pit on the Arizona side of the river.

[The Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) began trying to organize jobseekers at the Hoover Dam site in April 1931. On July 11 men were arrested for promoting the union. Following a wage cut of \$1 a day on 7 August, IWW speakers called for a strike, with

limited success. The strike was called off on 12 August when the Bureau of Reclamation ordered all strikers off the reservation.—ed.]

Tom was in town to bring me his paycheck when they had the strike. They threw up the gate right away out by Railroad Pass. Anybody who was out of the reservation couldn't get in, and anybody who was in the reservation couldn't get out. So he was without work for almost 2 months.

Tom used to ride out every day with some electricians who did have a pass to get through the gate. He would come out every day with them, but he'd have to stop at the gate and try to get a job, and there were so many things listed that there were jobs available. One day he came out with these electricians, and they were a little late, so they all held up their pass. He didn't even have time to get out of the car, and he held up a Campho Phenique label [laughter], and it was the same size as the pass, and they waved him through. All right. Now, he couldn't get *out* until he got a pass. [laughter] And they didn't know what become of him, because they had to go on to work.

So then he got a job with the New Mexico Construction Company, working on building the streets and the sewer system for Boulder City; that's when he used 4 mules and a Fresno scraper. He was going around and asking everybody for a job. And first they asked him, "Can you drive a Fresno and 4 mules?" Well, heck, coming from Missouri he could drive a mule; he was a Missouri mule himself! [chuckling] So anyway, he said, "Sure."

They said, "Well, you go way over there and get yourself a mule and a Fresno." He wasn't real sure what a Fresno was. It was just a dirt-scraping thing that he had to walk behind (but he'd walked behind a plow, so he knew how to do that) and you'd take it to the edge and dump it. Now, you see, Le Tourneau had

all this marvelous earth-moving machinery, but New Mexico Construction was clear back in the 1800s with mules, see? All right.

Then Tom got a job with Stearns Rogers, building a filter plant. And this is quite a story, because my husband had been the water commissioner and the city marshal in Silverton, Colorado. And Stearns Rogers had just built the Shenandoah Mine Syndicate's big mill for the mines up in Silverton. At the time they were going to lose money on their contract if they couldn't show that the mill was working, so as water commissioner he let them use city water to do that. So when he found out that they were going to build the filter plant at Boulder City, Tom wrote a letter to Stearns Rogers in Denver, and they sent him to the filter plant, and he helped to build the filter plant. Now, the man that was in charge of the filter plant—well, he was in charge of all the work around Boulder City—kept trying to can Tom, but he couldn't can him because Tom was hired by Stearns Rogers and sent in here by him. So that was once when he got a break, see.

Well, after that he became a filter plant operator, but in between he helped plant trees in the park. I don't know how many of you remember, but the park between the senior citizens' center and Central Market, they planted rose trees in there. The wind would come up, and it'd just dry those roses out, and so then they finally took all of those roses out and instead planted oleanders and things like that that would really grow. He used to get up again at 4:00 in the morning and water trees, because if you water in the middle of the day... people who have good lawns know that if you water in the middle of the day it will scald.

After that he was a filter plant operator, and then he was an operator on the pumps at the dam—the miscellaneous pumps which are back in the different tunnels around. And

he also operated the disposal plant. But he never did work on the dam. Being as he'd always worked for subcontractors, we were not eligible for either a government house or a Six Companies house, and we were in tents, of course, all this time.

* * * * *

Guy Rocha: Leo Dunbar came on the project in September, 1931. Leo, why don't you explain the circumstances of your finding a job on the Boulder Canyon project.

Leo Dunbar: I was fortunate because I was working for the Bureau of Reclamation in Colorado. I was transferred down here in 1931 in September. The job was going to be similar to what I was doing in Colorado, so I didn't have any of the hardships that a lot of the people who came in 1931 did. But I'm going to tell you a little bit about one thing that I felt was kind of a hardship.

My wife and I had 3 small children, and I went back at Christmastime in 1931 to bring the family back. We arrived here on New Year's Eve, 1932. The government had shipped my furnishings and everything we had down, and it was deposited in a brick house on Denver Street that had just been finished. Now, the plaster was wet, and everything was soaking, and, of course, they put the bedding on the floor in the living room and all the rest of the furniture on top of the bedding.

I had been living in the camp on the site of what is now Lakeview. And after the family came down, some of the boys from the camp said, "Well, we'll help you get going." There was no heat in the house; we couldn't use electricity for heat, but there was an electric range that had just been installed. So the first thing, we loaded the fireplace full of wood, touched it off.. .and, my friends, there wasn't

one bit of the smoke went out of that house except out in the rooms! [laughter] Well, we pulled the wood out of the fireplace and got rid of that.

The next thing was to make ourselves beds. So what we did was we lighted the range and used the oven in the range, went out and found a bunch of big rocks, put them in the range and warmed them. And we wrapped them up in papers and put them in the beds at night. And that was *my* hardship in coming here. But I was lucky to have a job, and my work went on from there.

My first work when I arrived here...as you know, Boulder.. .or Hoover Dam—I *still* want to call it Boulder— had a lot of firsts. The early part of the work, of course, was the measurement of water in the river. That was what I was really sent down here for. And we did; our crew measured the water daily in the river.

Then the next thing, we found that after it had been made a federal reservation, there were people who had squatted on different places on the reservation, and they wanted the government to pay for something they'd done. Some of them had a little patch of land somewhere, and they wanted to homestead, which couldn't be done at that time, of course. Others had a little spring. So some of the very first work I did here was being sent out to those places to find out exactly what the condition was and then [settle] that claim.

I'm going to tell you just one instance. The government received a bill from a man who lived in northern Arizona. He'd planted 12 palm trees on the shores of the Upper Lake up above Temple Bar. He put in a claim to the government for \$1,000 for each one of those 12 trees. So we went up to investigate that. We found out that in the 12 trees, 6 of them were male, 6 of them were female. So 6 of them were the only ones that were any good, and

they had old, dried dates on them that hadn't been picked for 2 or 3 years. When we finally talked it over, we said there was really no right for anything of that. However, we did decide to say that the man had done the work at the time, and we recommended that he get \$5 a tree for his planting the trees. I don't know what the final settlement was, but that was our recommendation.

* * * * *

Marion Allen, you came on the project in December 1931, and, of course, you have published a small work outlining your activities. Where did you go to get work? Who did you talk to? Did you have any side connections? What kind of work was available?

Marion Allen: Well, I was one of the lucky ones. I had known Mr. Crowe from about 1912. ..or, rather he knew me. Mr. Frank Crowe was the general superintendent of the job here. I contacted my father, who was on the job—he had come early in the spring. And my instructions from him were to go to Las Vegas and see the employment agent, and he would send me right out. The only trouble was, by the time I got to Las Vegas, in about 2 weeks time, the employment agent—who had been an old friend of the family and was given instructions from Crowe to send me out—had died. This kind of shook me a little bit, but I come to the gate, and you know my hard luck story: the guards let me through; I contacted my father here, and he sent me back to Las Vegas. He said that they'd make arrangements to send me out. About 2 days later we finally got out. So I didn't have too much of a hardship.

The only problem was they warned me that the new employment agent, Mr. E. H.

McAdams, was a hard-boiled man. You could get out on the job, but when you got there you had to take care of yourself and be sure you didn't get hurt, get your work done, because you never got any second chance with McAdams. When I arrived they sent me out to the tunnels. I'd never seen the inside of a tunnel, and I wasn't too enthused, but I didn't want to pass anything up. This tunnel looked like about as big as this building here, and I went into it, so it didn't bother me too much... about that far away.

I went to work on 13 December 1931, and I was quite fortunate there, because about 3 days later the timekeeper quit. Mr. Red McCabe was the walker on the job, and he was under Woody Williams, the assistant superintendent. But Red McCabe had also worked on a Bureau of Reclamation construction job with [my father] about 1912, and so he knew me. So he give me the timekeeper's job, which didn't pay any more—65¢ an hour, I believe it was something like that—but it was a little easier job. So I jumped at that, and I was fortunate I stayed there. Of course, I also found out that part of this timekeeper's job, number keeper's job, was to see that the powder got loaded up in trucks. And we'd load about 2 tons of powder and, although I didn't know at the time it was against the law, we also loaded the primers on the truck. [laughter] And this was part of my job. But after a short time they stopped us from taking the primers in with the dynamite.

From then on, we stayed till it was holed through—got the tunnels through in the spring of 1932, and then they started the concrete. As I followed construction, I was anxious to get back on the concrete and get out of that mining—I wasn't a miner. So I went up to the upper end of the portals where they just started the tunnel for the concreting

and explained that I was a cement finisher. This they doubted very much, and the fellow laughed about it. But he said, "If you're a finisher, why, we need you."

After that I put in about 4 1/2 years as a cement finisher, and was the subforeman part of the time. Usually stayed right with it... it was a pretty good job. You didn't get very rich, but you always made enough to eat on. I think I was very fortunate to always have a job.

* * * * *

Carl Merrill came to the project in January 1933. Carl, tell us about your different experiences.

Carl Merrill: I was much more fortunate than those who preceded me. My uncle was a bank manager in Hollywood and he knew H. S. Anderson, so I had a job when I arrived. I not only had a job, I was thought to be a big shot, and they moved me into one of the suites in the Anderson dormitory. But it didn't take them long to move me upstairs with the rest of the flunkies, and they found out I was no big shot. [laughter]

I worked as a flunky for a year and 8 months, I believe it was. I had to learn to carry dishes. I was going through the kitchen one time, and H. S. Anderson was right in front of me, and I slipped on a wet spot with 16 platters on my arm. He took me back to the office and deducted \$2 from my next salary, [laughter] which salary at that time was \$60 a month and board and room.

I got tired of working for Andersons, and so I quit. Now, the only way you could go from one contract to another was quit, because they would not hire you if you had a job with one of the other contractors. Well, Anderson Brothers [Boarding and Supply

Company] were part of Six Companies. And so I quit. Then I started chasing Mack [Mr. McAdams, the employment agent] up and down the country. Then I finally got a job: I went down as a mucker.

Now, a mucker was the one that had to clean the rock surface before the concrete was poured. This had to be clean enough so that you could practically eat off of it. Well, we did this for a while, and then I got a little better job: we went to concrete puddling. This is where you wore hip boots, you know, and a hard hat. They'd pour the concrete, and it was up to you to get it spread out with your feet. You had to work it pretty good, or you'd leave rock pockets. And you didn't dare do these because if you did, they had to be taken out and the space filled. This was hard work, you know.

I was back in the various tunnels all this time, and they finally started pulling the plug, I think, in the number 2 tunnel on the Arizona side. At that time they put a monorail across the top of the main tunnel; then they could bring agitators full of concrete down on the main high line and set them on trucks. The trucks would back into this monorail, and there they would be picked up. I would hook them up and unhook them, just as a hook tender, and they would be monorailed back to where they needed the concrete.

Well, of course, I still wanted a better job. So I asked Virginia Steelworkers, which at the time was tying all this reinforcing steel that went into all the walls of the various sections of the power house. And I got a job working for Herb Merner, who was the superintendent. The foreman was quite a heavyset fellow; I don't remember his name. His name was George; that's all I remember. All of us down there, we didn't have second names; we were always called by our first

name—usually Blackie, Whitie, or Skip or whatever it might be. A lot of them wouldn't even tell you their names. I think they were afraid to. And so I tied steel. I went from... when I first went down there to the site as a laborer it was \$4 a day, and then hook tender was \$4.50 a day. Then I went to the steel crew at \$5 a day. I finally got \$5.60 a day tying steel.

Well, when they finished pouring the plugs, and they started putting the penstocks in, too, why, it was up to the steelworkers to get the steel into these cradles that held the penstocks in place. All the steel was laid on top of the power house, and it was up to 2 or 3 of us to get ahold of one of these. . .oh, about 30-foot pieces of inch-and-a-quarter steel in a semicircle and get it through a small tunnel back to where they were used. Well, the journeymen \$6-a-day men and the other \$5.60-a-day men, myself included, were all doing the same work. So I asked Herb; I says, "I want a raise. I want to get the same money they're getting."

He said, "Young man, I'll pay a man for what they know, not for being you." And so I worked on and kept pouring.

[laughter]

And you finished up as a chemist with the federal government, right?

Well, this was quite a while afterwards. I worked for the subcontractor who helped put the roof on. And then I moved out of state a couple of times. I went to work on the Imperial Dam tying steel for a while. I went to Alaska and worked for Anderson Brothers up there—Endorf Field. When I come back, I went to work for Basic Magnesium in Henderson, Nevada. And then in 1945 I went to work with the Bureau of Mines as a chemist,

my profession when I graduated from college in 1932.

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Tom King: Some of the jobs that have been described to us so far are obviously very difficult jobs, indeed—hard, back-breaking jobs. But it was an economic and social irony during the Great Depression that often getting the job could be even harder than the job itself. The people who are sitting on this panel tonight are quite fortunate in that they indeed did get employment. The general situation, however, in this area at that time was different in many respects from what we've been hearing, in that there were a great number of men who were out of work right in the midst of plenty.

As soon as it became public knowledge that the Hoover Dam project (or Boulder Dam project) was underway, unemployed men from all over the nation flocked to this area. As you know, there were a number of tent cities located in Las Vegas in close juxtaposition to the hiring hall that was down there. There were 2 other tent cities at Railroad Pass—one named Pitcher and the other called Oklahoma City, perhaps in reference to a number of Oklahomans who had camped there. Most of the residents of these tent cities were unemployed.

It was an many cases very difficult indeed to get a job, and quite often subterfuge of one kind or another had to be employed. Mrs. Godbey made reference to the fact that her husband had to misrepresent himself when he got the job with New Mexico Construction Company by telling them that he could operate a Fresno scraper. Well, that's a very small white lie to tell, and it doesn't even compare with some of the other stories that

I've heard. We were going to have Mr. Clifford Jones come in tonight and talk. Unfortunately he was unable to make it. Mr. Jones could not get a job at the hiring hall because he was too young to work at the dam site. Instead, he got a job first in Anderson mess hall. In order to get that job, he had to first get on the reservation. And, of course, he couldn't get on the reservation without a pass that said he had a job. It's an interesting closed circle. What he did instead was to collect a bunch of company scrip in Las Vegas, and come to the gate and tell them he was there to redeem the scrip. Once he got inside the reservation, he was then able to get the job.

This is all by way of saying that it should be apparent to us that getting a job was often difficult and could require a lot of imagination and initiative on the part of the one who did it. We are hoping that tonight some of you in the audience will be willing to come forward and discuss some of your own experiences, not only about getting a job here in Boulder City or Boulder Dam, but also some of the other topics that are going to come up in the course of the evening.

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Erma Godbey: My husband, Tom, was working for the government. His brother, Everett, wanted a job with Six Companies, who gave men with children preference over single men. So in order to get the job, Everett gave the name of Tom Godbey instead of his own name...and he also stated that he had 3 children. He finally got a job, and he worked on the dam for a long time.

Every once in a while they sent somebody around to the houses to take a school census. And they'd tell the men down on the job, "We're going to take a school census."

Everett would come home real fast, and he'd say, "Erma, when they come to take the school census, the 3 younger kids are mine!" Well, he had said on his application to get the job that they had 3 kids. Well, the kids were there because we all lived together at 609 L, and so that was the way that was done.

At first, we didn't have any schools. There was no schools in Boulder at all, and so older kids had to go to Las Vegas to school, if they could get in there. Then they used 3 of the first Six Company houses built—they were down fairly close to the El Rancho Motel, down in there—and they used those for school buildings. Different women here in town who had taught school before they had come to Boulder City volunteered to teach. And people would pay a dollar and a half—I don't know whether it was a week or a month—per child. (I think it was a month.) And if they had 2 children, why, the second child was a dollar. There were no books or anything. They just had to do the best they could.

Then, of course, we all raised Cain because we didn't have any school. But this was a reservation; it wasn't a part of the state of Nevada. And so then we did get started to build a school. The first school was a brick building, which is now our city hall, and it didn't get finished until the latter part of September of 1932. The Six Companies contacted the school district in Las Vegas, and they told them what books they would need, and they kept them in their store. The people had to buy books for the children, and the school just didn't have any equipment at all. They had to do so much using the gelatin and making papers from the books for the kids to study from because there was *never* enough books in the Six Companies Store for the people even to buy when they could buy. It was about 3 years later when the state

bought the books back from us. But at first, the government built the building, and Six Companies hired the teachers. But we did go by the curriculum of the state of Nevada.

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Let's hear from Leo Dunbar...his early experiences with living arrangements when he came to the project in late 1931.

Leo Dunbar: Well, I had a house furnished, of course. As I told you, when we came the house was here. I knew for a week ahead about when it would be finished, and I went back at Christmastime and brought the family down. We paid the government \$17.50 a month for the rent on the house. Now, of course, we paid our own utilities, but the rent was very, very cheap, naturally.

The living conditions were very good here. The Six Companies had a wonderful store. I want to tell you a little something about that, too. The Six Companies office would issue scrip. And some of the boys that were working for the Six Companies couldn't wait till the payday, so they'd go in ahead and get scrip. A certain amount would be issued to them. And the custom become here that scrip was worth 80¢ on the dollar for exchange. I was kind of a frugal person, and I used to keep a few dollars ahead; so I had some friends that would go in and get some scrip, and I'd buy it from them for 80 percent, and then I could trade that scrip to the Six Company store [at face value to purchase goods]. So that was pleasant for a living condition here, that some people could have....

Conditions were good here, and I think that we had an enjoyable time here. When we were first coming, we'd heard these stories about the Boulder Canyon project

and how the lizards and the rattlesnakes and tarantulas, scorpions and all those things were killing people, and in addition to that they were dying of heat prostration. And I got permission to go over to Denver to talk to them before coming down here on transfer. I went over and talked to 2 or 3 of the boys in the Denver office who had been down here, and they told me that the situation would be better down here, and if I could leave my family in Colorado until a place was arranged for me, then we'd have a house in time—everything would work out all right. Well, that was true. I've been happy all my life that I accepted the transfer to Hoover Dam. It's been a wonderful experience for me, and I don't know where I could have gone where I would have had the pleasure that I've had to live in Boulder City and to work for the government here in this area.

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Marion Allen, when you came to the project in December 1931, Boulder City was in the final stages of completion—at least the housing. Could you talk about your initial living arrangements?

Marion Allen: Well, my father had been working here since spring, and he was able to get a house. You were on priorities on houses. You had to be here and know that you were going to be here some time before they'd give you a house. He was able to get a small house; I think it was on Fifth Street—it might have been New Mexico. The house was quite small—a little, 2-room house—but it had a large porch on it. It wasn't too much of a house, but it was shelter.

Of course, in those times...it's just a little hard to compare times. That's where

people get off a little.... Air conditioning was something we really hadn't even heard of. Refrigeration was very new. You got a cake of ice, and before you got home it was gone. [laughs]

When we come here, not all of Boulder City wasn't near completed. But we lived in that house for some time. It was pretty crowded, but we had a big porch for beds. Then my wife wanted her own house, so she finally wrangled a house down on Seventh Street. This was a one-room, cold-water flat because they didn't have any water heaters. Otherwise, it had a small gas stove furnished; the company was selling refrigerators (that was one of our first investments) , and that was really a luxury. Then, of course, radios were even quite new at that time. We got a small radio, and I think they had a station in Las Vegas that we got. But I tell some of the kids today about we never had any TV....

This little house down there on Seventh Street, what the wife kicked about, the sand come in off the desert, and the floor would get about a half inch deep of sand, you know. She'd sweep it out; by the time she got it swept out, it would move back in. But there wasn't really hardships...we wasn't used to the things that we take for granted today.

We lived there in that house pretty near 4 years. Rent was enormous; it was \$15 a month. I think we paid \$2 a month for water, but there was a restriction on that water—you didn't water a yard, not even a green plant out there. If you did that, they'd be right down and they'd give you trouble and charge you double, which would be about \$4, which wouldn't have been bad, but the second time, that was it. But they didn't kick about you running the water all night on the roof. And that was our cooling system. We'd fix the hose so it'd spray the roof and run down over the burlap canvas. That

made our cooling. So that worked out pretty good. Otherwise, the worst thing we had to contend with was the heat—trying to sleep. About the time you'd cool off a little—about 6:00, 6:30 or 7:00 in the morning—you had to be on the bus going to work. So as far as I was concerned, that was the hardest part of it. Otherwise, we were probably some of the fortunate ones. The other people that lived in the camps in tents and all—who didn't have any refrigeration and very little water—probably suffered a lot more.

Marion, did you have indoor plumbing in your house?

Oh, yes. We had a basin and a toilet and shower. And you didn't need the hot water much because the [tap] water was just about [the] right [temperature] for a shower in the summertime. [audience laughs] And ice trays were never full; they was always empty. We emptied them out before the cubes froze. But the only thing that we lacked in plumbing was the water heater.

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Mary Ann Merrill, why don't you describe your experience. You came here in June of 1933.

Mary Ann Merrill: Of course, we were a little latecomers, you know, from the '31ers, but when Mother and I came in 1933, Dad had already been here. He had written and said he had a 4-room place—hut. And he was so proud; he had a Monitor General Electric refrigerator and the 4 rooms. Four rooms would probably be like a living room today, you know. But there was 4 rooms. And he had a fan, and he had that refrigerator, and he was very proud of it, and it really came in

very handy. Of course, this was 1933, 2 years after the others.

We lived down on what's called now Lower Avenue M, and there was only one side on the street. The other side didn't have any homes. And within about 8 months, why, we moved up in the world—moved up to Avenue L, the second street up. They had some little duplexes up there. That was where we lived until we got a home down on Avenue D.

In those days—perhaps because I was a lot younger than I am now—why, the heat didn't really, truly bother us so much. And it was a great time for young ladies then, because there was probably 10 to 15 fellows for every woman in the town, so you're the belle of the ball all the time. You really got around. And we had dances on Saturday nights—old Legion Hall. Everybody went in their long dresses and so forth, and you really had a good time.

My time in Boulder City, my remembrances of it, were very happy times. Then I met my husband here, and that was a good time. Of course, it took a long time for me to land him after I met him [audience laughs], but I finally did. But the living conditions weren't all that bad for us then. They've improved a lot. And then finally we did get the water coolers, and that was great. But I missed a lot of those old times [1931 and 1932], and I'm sort of grateful that I did when...I hear people like Erma Godbey recall her time. But our time in Boulder City has been great, and we've enjoyed living here.

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Carl Merrill: Nobody's mentioned the dormitories. When I came in here, most of the workmen on the dam that were not married and in the mess hall lived in dormitories. Well, the dormitory rooms were about 8 feet by 10

feet with a bed—that was it. And anything else that ended up in the room, you put it there—like a dresser or a bureau—that was up to you.

You had a bull cook. Now, some of you don't know what a bull cook is; he was the one that was the janitor for the dormitory. Well, if you wanted to, you would slip him some extra money, and he would clean your room for you. Otherwise, you had to do it yourself.

Living in the dormitories, you had to eat in the mess hall. And though the food was good and wholesome, you got tired of it. So it wasn't long before I moved out, and I moved up and started living with the ranger that lived on Arizona Street on the lower side. He had quite a large basement under that house, and I think there was 4 or 5 of us that had beds in that room. I think it cost us \$5 a month or something like that. And then also there were homes in Boulder City that would take in roomers and maybe room and board. And I lived on California Street for a while and had a room in a private home.

It was about that time that I met Mary Ann. Her mother and dad had roomers and boarders. She was a pretty good cook, and so it wasn't long before I moved in with Mrs. Vaughan—I didn't move in, but I started eating with Mrs. and Mr. Vaughan, and got *much* better food than we got at the dormitories.

Mary Ann Merrill: When I started going with Carl, he kept trying to get me to ask my mother to let him board there, and I wouldn't have any part of it. So finally one night he came to get me and he said, "You know, Mrs. Vaughan, I've been trying to come over here and board with you, and Mary Ann won't let me.

And she said, "Well, you come any time. You're welcome." She thought he was great,

you know? [audience laughs] But I didn't really want him to.... [laughter]

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I want to ask Marion Allen and Carl Merrill one question regarding working on the dam. There's always been some controversy over safety conditions on the dam. Certainly there were a number of strike activities in 1931, a proposed strike in 1933 that didn't come off, and then a strike in 1935. I'd like to get their impressions of safety conditions on the dam early on—if they were rectified, modified, what kind of health care was provided. And, of course, we had a number of conflicting situations: we had the contractors there; we had the federal government; and then we had 2 states which claimed jurisdiction in terms of conditions and their respective labor commissioners. So there was a lot of controversy there.

Marion Allen: Well, safety was something that was preached. From the time that Mr. Crowe started as a young engineer—he worked for the Bureau of Reclamation for years—one of his first things when he started a job was to have facilities for doctors and nurses. And that was the one thing here that was...they had a hospital with 3 doctors. And when you went on a job and when you rode on the bus, the first thing you'd see was "Safety First." When you got on the job, "Safety First." But, of course, like all people, they disregarded the signs a lot of times: "Don't go in the tunnel without your hardhats. Don't go out there on the rope without your safety belt. Don't work on that thing without your glasses." But working men, in a hurry lots of times, they forgot their hat, or they forgot their belt and those things, but sometimes the foremen were a little lax and did not send them back. We

had safety meetings. Nobody attended unless they were forced to, because they took up too much of what little leisure time you had. But it was stressed very much. Of course, it was a hazardous job. When you think about the high scalers and the men working above you all the time, rocks falling out of the top of the tunnel....

I had one particular instance that was a little funny on the safety. This one fellow come from the South was out there as a cement finisher. Well, he'd never been in the tunnels. So his first day, these rocks'd drop on the cement. Once in a while they'd hit them. So this fellow stopped at the tool shed going in where you get your equipment and asked them if they had another hardhat. And they said, "Well, what do you need a hardhat for? You have one."

He said, "Well," he said, "I'm always bending over, and I'd like one for the other end." [laughter]

It was a hazardous job for the reason of the machinery running, equipment running and the cave-ins occasionally. But we had safety inspectors from the states; we had federal inspectors, and we had the company safety inspectors. But the record, when you think about it, with 5,000 men working here at one time—and I've watched a lot of statistics in construction all my life—on this hazardous job, I think there was a very small number of accidents. They also had, I think, first-quality doctors. Dr. Scofield that took Dr. Hatch's place was a good doctor.

One little deal that happened along then shows you the.... I developed scarlet fever; I always could get something *different*. And out of the camp there, 5,000 people, 2 of us got sent to the pesthouse. The pesthouse was down where the old camp used to be down by the depot. And it was a very nice

vacation—30 days there, all the free board and room, and a doctor and nurse—a male nurse—to take care of us. And the doctor come and see us everyday. So I enjoyed that. But there was only 2 of us out of the whole camp that had scarlet fever. They had 2 more in there with smallpox, and one with something else like diphtheria. But as quick as you developed something like that you'd go to the hospital and report in, which you were supposed to if you got sick. And they would run you right to the pesthouse, because with all these men down there, it would have been hazardous.

As far as the safety on the job, there was quite a bit of trouble. They run gas engines underground, and that was something Arizona wasn't supposed to admit, but they did for some reason. They did have blowers to get the gas out of the tunnels, but if you rushed right in sometimes after a blast, which people were anxious to get in.... It was cooler in the tunnels, so there was always a tendency to rush in as quickly as possible, and that powder could give you a little trouble—headaches and so on. But I think the safety was about as good here as any place I'd ever worked.

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Carl Merrill: I agree that the safety was stressed heavily, but most of us didn't pay any attention to it. Now, I don't remember ever going to a safety meeting. And the story goes that if you got hurt in Nevada, you better get to Arizona as fast as you could. You'd get fixed up over there because the compensation was much better in Arizona than it was in Nevada at that time.

I, too, remember having scarlet fever. And the pesthouse that I was in was on Avenue Y, pretty near down to the sewage disposal plant. I was in there for 30 days. You're pretty sick

for 2 or 3 days, and then after that you just got to weather it out.

I remember going to the hospital, and this is something most of us tried to avoid, because if you'd get something that wasn't quite up to snuff and you went to the hospital for it, you were liable to get kicked off the job. And you needed that job. I remember walking across the second floor of the power house on the Arizona side one time; I wasn't paying attention to what I was doing. Oneleg slipped into a hole, and I landed on this side of my ribs. Well, I didn't dare go to the doctor; I suffered it out, you know. And I think this happened in many, many cases—that people didn't report their hurts and their illnesses. I think they thought that was the thing to do rather than lose the job over it.

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I think what might have been the most controversial aspect of living on the project was the nature of the government of Boulder City. The administration of a man by the name of Sims Ely incurred many conflicting points of view. [See end note] I want to start with Erma Godbey, if she would address the kind of life one led under the administration of Sims Ely.

Erma Godbey: Well, Sims Ely was just like a dictator. The thing with Sims Ely... if anybody wrote in about him, the powers that be never did get the message. His son was in the Department of the Interior, and everything had to go through him that came from Boulder City. So if anybody wrote in any complaints, why, it never got any further.

Now, we had a ranch for a long time, and Sims Ely didn't want us to have the ranch because cows and horses made flies, and they would come to Boulder City. And one time

our cow got up in Boulder City, and it got put in the police impound. [audience chuckling] Sims called Tom, and he said, "Get that cow out of here right now." Tom went up to get it out, and by that time the kids were out of school. They were all over looking at the cow and talking to it and saying nice things to it, and then Sims came out, and he said, "Mr. Godbey, you wait until the children go back into school; they're all enjoying watching the cow." [laughter]

We had our Sons of the Legion orchestra and the different dances at the old Legion Hall, when he didn't want us to have any moonlight dances. He thought that something was going on whenever they turned off the lights for a moonlight dance. My husband was one of the ones that were chaperoning the moonlight dances, and he said, "Well, the boys are just too scared to even dance unless we turn the lights low." And so he said, "You can come up and observe."

Sims came up and observed, and he saw there wasn't any necking, but the boys couldn't watch their feet. Those that we had taught to dance—we older women, who were chaperones, too—they would ask the girls to dance when we had a moonlight dance, but they wouldn't ask them when the lights were on. [audience laughs]

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Bob Parker: Well, on Sims Ely...he was the full authority, no way you could back him down. Now, we had a man that came in here from Texas by the name of Clarence Newlands, who built the Green Hut—one of the first restaurants in Boulder City. And he brought a colored cook in here from Texas—an old colored cook. See, there wasn't any colored people in Boulder City. Sims Ely called him in there and he said, "You get rid

of that colored cook. I have had too many complaints about that colored cook."

And Clarence Newlands said, "Mr. Ely, how much money you got?"

Sims Ely said, "What difference does it make how much money I got?"

And Clarence Newlands says, "If you've got \$80,000, my Green Hut is yours tomorrow. And you can hire who you want to. But as long as I own the Green Hut, you're not telling me who to hire." He kept his colored cook. He supported the colored cook.... Sims Ely tried to bluff Clarence Newlands, and it didn't work.

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Leo Dunbar: Well, I never had any dealings with Mr. Ely directly. We were good friends, and I felt that he was doing the job the best anybody could do. There was some criticism, of course, and I think we still have that same criticism now with our city officials. But it was time for a sternness. Probably 90 percent of the people that were here in Boulder City at that time never caused any trouble, but there *were* a group that were *always* in bad. And when the Wobblies [Industrial Workers of the World] got in here and tried to get a strike going, there was plenty of trouble. Mr. Ely was *very* strict about those things. He had a good set of rangers who took care of the job and did the work. Of course, that was one reason that the government decided to move everybody out who wasn't employed at that time. But I would say from my experience that the criticism was unjust about Mr. Ely.

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Marion Allen: I had a little dealing with Sims Ely on small, minor deals, but I found him very fair. He was very stern; I think he didn't believe in too much partying...or, that

is, any wild partying. But I know the guards [at the Railroad Pass gate] never bothered anyone when they come back with an extra bottle of whiskey or 2. They seemed to look the other way. But he didn't stand for any.... Even when the beer was legal in Boulder City, why, if you got out of line, the rangers might either take you home, or after about the second time they might take you up to Mr. Ely or send you up there. And he was pretty rough. There was a couple of thousand men here—pretty near that many in the dormitories—and all the people that was here, and I think 3 rangers took care of the whole thing. He was probably a little stern, but I think it was necessary at the time. But I always thought he was very fair. I guess there was some criticism that he got a little rough with people or made them do things that they didn't like, but I think the majority went right along with him.

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Carl Merrill: I have to agree that I believe he was fair. My only experience with him was I got caught on the reservation speeding one time. And so for some reason the officer gave me a ticket—I guess he didn't like me. Then I had to go up and see Sims Ely. Well, he banished me from the reservation for one day. I was very pleased about this—I hadn't had a day off in probably 6 months. [audience laughs] And so I took my car and spent the day in Las Vegas with my sister, and come back the next morning and went to work.

Another time I was working day shift and I took some books out of the library. Well, I transferred to swing shift right away, and I couldn't get the books back. I was called up...I had to take a day off, too, to go up and see Sims about this. And I think he fined me a couple of dollars for each book. Each book was worth about 50¢, but he fined me a couple

of dollars for each book, which I paid. Well, I think most of us...the younger ones tried to avoid him. You know, if we did something we looked around to see if Sims was anywhere around us. And I think by avoiding him, we stayed out of a lot of trouble.

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Mary Ann Merrill: Well, fortunately, I didn't have anything to do with Mr. Sims Ely. But I've *heard*, you know, that he was very strict, and you better not get into any trouble. I tried not to get into any trouble, so I didn't have any real problems with Mr. Ely. I think he was very fair. I know that there was a time when we used to go up to Government Park in the hot summer nights, and we'd go up and take our bike and stuff in the park. Well, there wasn't any partying up there because we knew that the rangers came around and around and around the park. But it was one way to stay cool, and it was something to do in the evenings because, of course, at that time we didn't have television and so forth and so on. But I really believe that if he hadn't been the kind of man he was, perhaps we'd've had more problems in Boulder City in the very early days, because there was a lot of roughnecks around. And lots of people...I think that they behaved because of Mr. Ely.

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I regret to say that we have run out of time and must close this discussion. I want to thank the panel tonight for coming here and presenting their views on the Boulder Canyon project and work on the dam and life in Boulder City. It's been a very good experience, and we have it on tape. The celebration goes on as we commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the construction of Hoover Dam. Thank you very much.

NOTE

In 1931 Secretary of the Interior Raymond L. Wilbur appointed Sims Ely city manager of Boulder City. Mr. Ely was 62 years old at the time. He had held various jobs in Arizona and California before becoming Boulder City's manager, but he had little experience that would have prepared him for the responsibilities of his position. As city manager, Ely's duties included law enforcement, public health maintenance and revenue collection. He served as judge and jury, and controlled all civic affairs and activities connected with the development and maintenance of Boulder City. Sims Ely's authority was absolute, but he is widely regarded as having been impartial in his exercise of it. Following a lengthy period of failing health he resigned from his position in 1941 at the age of 71.

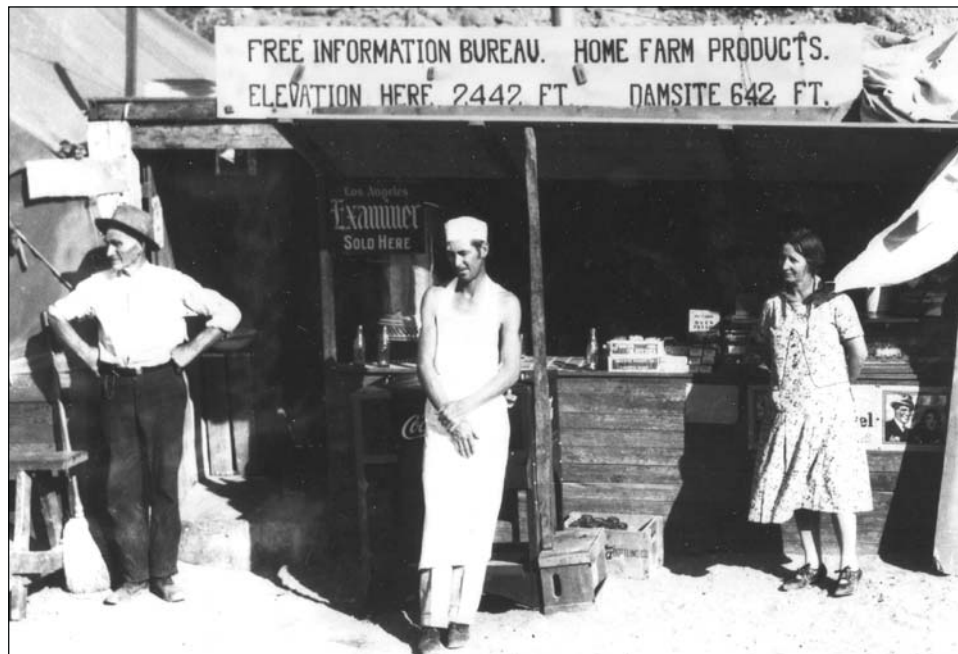
For a comprehensive general study of the early years of Boulder City, including a more detailed account of Sims Ely's role, see *In the Beginning...A History of Boulder City, Nevada*, by Dennis McBride. (Boulder City: Boulder City Chamber of Commerce, 1981.)

PHOTOGRAPHS

See next page.



High scalers at work preparing the Boulder Dam site.
(Manis Collection, UNLV Library)



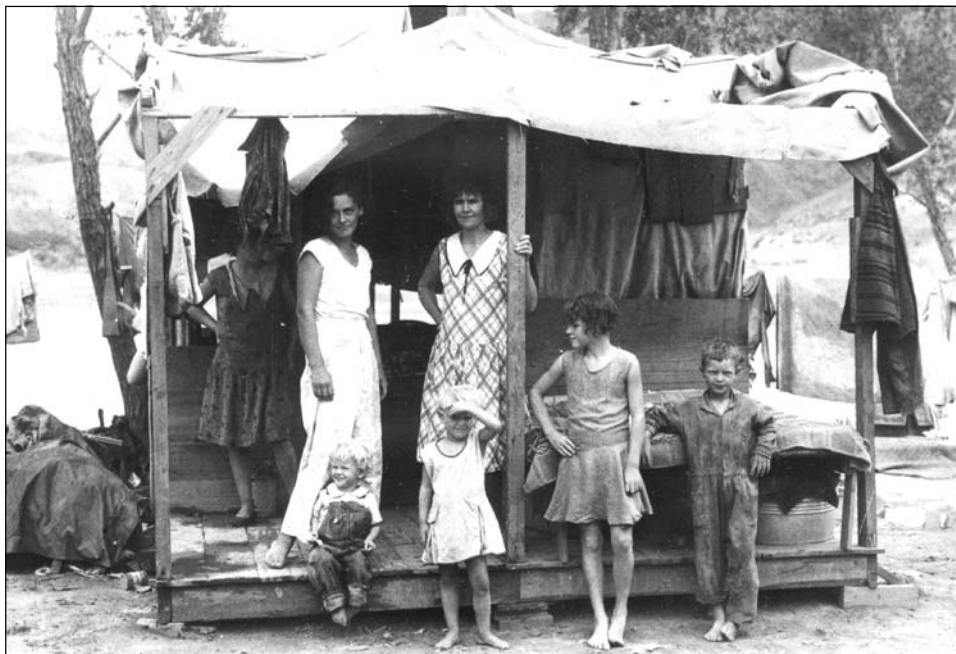
The first grocery store in Boulder City, April 1931. l to r, W. F. Shields, proprietor; Harry Buchanan, chef; Mrs. W. F. Shields.
(UPRR Collection, UNLV Library)



Teams drawing Fresno scrapers during early construction of railroad bed at Hoover dam site. (Bureau of Reclamation Collection, UNLV Library)



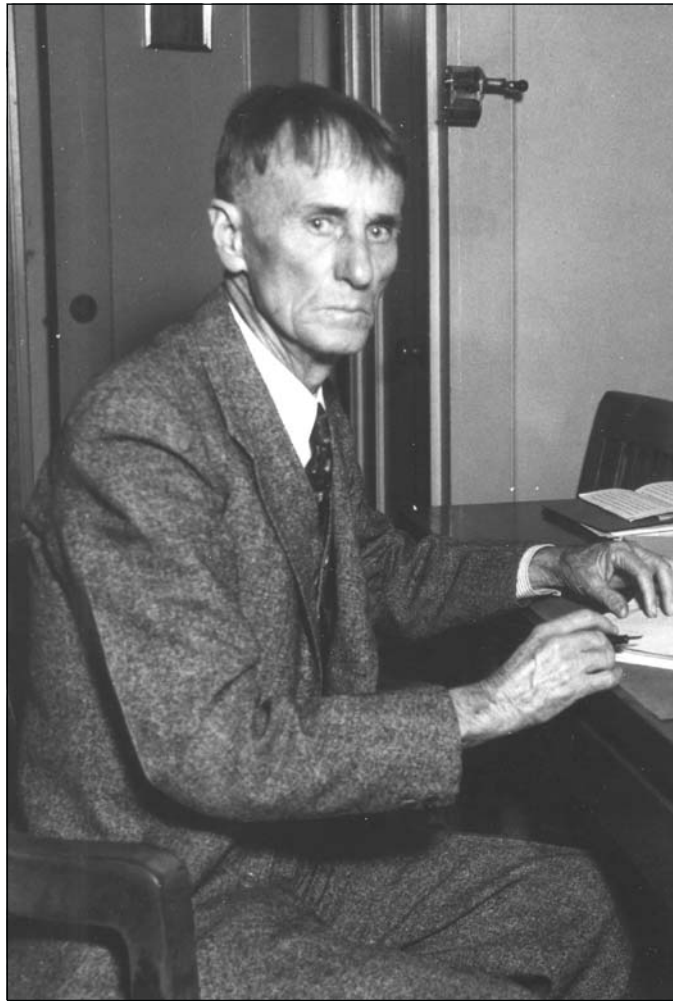
l to r: Bud Bodell, Chief of Security, Six Companies; Rev. Guy "Whataman" Hudson; Minnie "Ma" Kennedy; U.S. Marshal Claude Williams. Williamsville (or Ragtown), one of the first shantytowns on the dam site, was named for Marshal Williams. (Fenton-Harbour Collection)



Ragtown (Williamsville) family portrait, August 1931.
(UPRR Collection, UNLV Library)



Six Companies' married employees housing, Boulder City, 1932.
(Bureau of Reclamation Collection, UNLV Library)



Boulder City Manager Sims Ely, October 1931.
(UPRR Collection, UNLV Library)

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